

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 882

By Naifeh

A RESOLUTION to recognize William J. "Bill Jim" Davis on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those citizens who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their years of industry; and

WHEREAS, William J. "Bill Jim" Davis is one such estimable person who, after serving with distinction for forty-eight years as an insurance executive representing the State Farm Insurance Companies, began his much deserved retirement on January 31, 2006; and

WHEREAS, born on August 31, 1920, Bill Jim Davis attended primary and secondary schools in Memphis and rural Tipton County; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from high school in Covington, Mr. Davis enlisted in the United States Navy in 1938; he served aboard the *U.S.S. Helena* from 1939 to 1943, the *U.S.S. Hornet* until 1944, and was assigned to LST 343 as the engineering officer before his discharge as a lieutenant (JG) in 1946; and

WHEREAS, Bill Jim Davis was aboard the *U.S.S. Helena* on December 7, 1941, when she was torpedoed at Pearl Harbor; twenty-one sailors lost their lives in the attack and seventy-nine more were wounded; in quick response, the ship's crew sent up a heavy fire that kept her free of further damage; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis survived another assault upon the *U.S.S. Helena* when, during the Battle of Kula Gulf in July of 1943, she was sunk by Japanese destroyers; ultimately, Bill Jim Davis participated in thirteen major naval engagements in the Pacific before the end of World War II; his awards include the Asiatic Pacific Medal with thirteen battle stars and the Navy Unit Citation; and

WHEREAS, in January of 1951, during the Korean War, Bill Jim Davis was recalled to active duty and assigned to the Naval Air Station in Atlanta, Georgia; he was released from

active duty in 1954 and continued to serve his country as a lieutenant commander in the Naval Reserve until retiring in 1980; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis began his career as an insurance executive representing State Farm Insurance Companies on January 1, 1957; and

WHEREAS, from 1971 to 1983, William J. Davis capably served in the 87th to the 92nd Tennessee General Assemblies representing the good people of Senate District 27; and

WHEREAS, during his service in the Senate, Bill Jim Davis served on the Government Operations Committee; Judiciary Committee; Finance, Ways, and Means Committee; Senate Select Committee on Ethics; and the Commerce, Labor, and Agriculture Committee, serving as vice chairman in the 91st and 92nd assemblies; and

WHEREAS, William J. Davis is an active and important part of his community and profession, participating in numerous worthy organizations, including membership in the Tipton County Chamber of Commerce and service as president of the Covington Exchange Club; he has also served as post commander of the American Legion and is a member of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, the Retired Officers Association, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars; and

WHEREAS, his many professional accomplishments aside, Bill Jim Davis is most appreciative of the love, support, and companionship he shares with his wife, Helen Oliver, and two daughters, Billie Jean and Deborah; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis evinces his devout religious faith as a member of the First United Methodist Church, which he has served faithfully for many years; and

WHEREAS, Bill Jim Davis exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Mr. Davis has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his colleagues and clients; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor Mr. William J. "Bill Jim" Davis and commend his laudable service to the good people of Tennessee, salute his professional expertise and personal excellence,

and extend to this noble veteran and statesman our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement as well as every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.